

ALABAMA LAW FOUNDATION

w i n t e r 2 0 0 4



"It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly."...Scrooge
"Business! Mankind was my business!"...Marley's Ghost

During the holiday season, tradition directs our thoughts to those in need. As we are grateful for the blessings of our profession and our good jobs, we can also appreciate the opportunities for providing assistance to the less fortunate that the Alabama Law Foundation makes available. By funding a variety of groups, the Alabama Law Foundation helps lawyers across the state of Alabama provide legal assistance to the poor. Participation and support of these programs contributes toward the Alabama Law Foundation's mission of creating access to justice for all of Alabama's citizens.

Recent studies show that the number of people whose employment does not provide enough money for basic needs is increasing; nearly a quarter of the workforce between the ages of 18 and 64 earns less than \$9.04 an hour. Working full-time at that wage comes to \$18,000 a year, which is the Federal poverty line for a family of four. In Alabama, statistics for 1999 show that an average of 16% of the population earns below the poverty line; some counties have as high as up to 40% of the population living below the poverty line.

While the level of need seems overwhelming, through the Alabama Law Foundation lawyers are making a difference in the lives of Alabama citizens. The foundation is able to gather an overview of the various organizations, such as volunteer lawyer programs and community action groups, that help the poor with legal assistance. To streamline and thus stretch tight budgets, the state's three separate legal services programs were combined to form Legal Services Alabama. Under new Director Melissa Pershing, several offices throughout the state maintain a full time legal staff. As ALF's biggest grantee, Legal Services Alabama provides legal assistance for civil cases to those who are in need but could not otherwise afford it.

For example, Sara Creed, at Legal Services Alabama in Anniston, worked on a case involving a disabled woman living alone on SSI.

The client had contracted a local repairman for some needed repair work on her home. Unfortunately, he did an extremely poor job that not only failed to fix the problems with the house but also caused the house's roof to leak. Certainly, poor workmanship is not that unusual a scenario, but the client did not have the money to hire a lawyer to force the repairman to make restitution. Sara filed suit against the contractor, and the Court awarded her client the money to correct the shoddy work and the damage it caused. In an unusual twist, the contractor paid the money immediately after the judgment. Thanks to LSA, the contractor was not able to take advantage of this woman, and her home is no longer damaged.

Sometimes cases are emergencies. Sue Seidel, in the Mobile office, helped an elderly man avert a health crisis. He walked into the LSA office asking for help, because, due to communication problems with Medicaid, he was unable to get the two daily injections of insulin he needs. The client is 76 years old, shines shoes for an income, lives alone, and is undergoing radiation therapy for prostate cancer. Sue researched rules on Prior Medicaid Authorization, faxed letters to the pharmacist and the treating physician, and was able to get the client's insulin prescribed again and filled quickly. She also suggested actions for the pharmacist and doctor to take to prevent the problem from recurring. In what Sue calls "a brief service," she was able, thanks to LSA, to avert a serious health problem for the client, as well as help health personnel.

The lessons of Christmas Past, Present and Future are as true for us today as for Scrooge: In helping others we receive a greater good. In helping the poor, the Alabama Law Foundation helps create a more just society for all citizens. Please join the Alabama Law Foundation's work in keeping the spirit of Christmas alive all through the year.



Alexee Deep Awarded Cabaniss, Johnston Scholarship

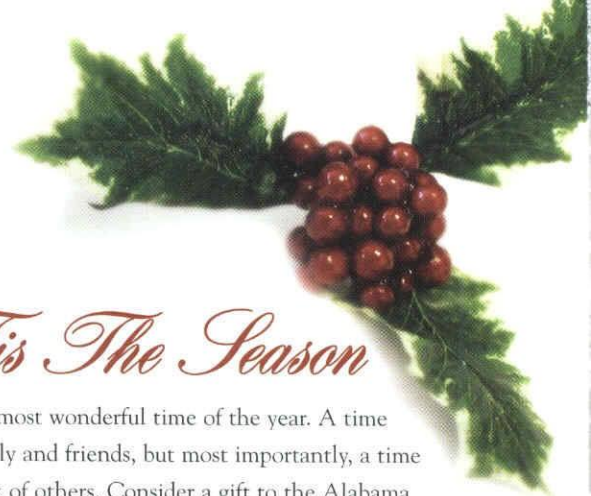
Meeting the Future

Alexee Deep has wanted to be a lawyer since she was seven years old. Currently a second-year law student at Cornell University, the Alabama Law Foundation is proud to award her the \$5,000 Cabaniss, Johnston Scholarship. Alexee was born and raised in Birmingham and is the daughter of Rima and Larry Deep.

In junior high school Alexee developed, in addition to her interest in law, a passion for science, particularly genetics and technology. She graduated from Indian Springs School, and in college decided to pursue connections between law and science—specifically medicine, technology and public policy. She obtained her bachelor's degree from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy and International Affairs and her master's degree in bio-ethics from the University of Pennsylvania. Upon receiving her law degree, she will be poised to work with vanguard legal issues in medicine and science.

Alexee is intrigued with legal complications arising from technology. "For instance," she says, "there are issues involving embryo custody. What if an infertile couple sets aside embryos for implanting but then divorces—who do the embryos belong to—him or her?" Alexee's unique combined interest in law and science extends to areas where new medical research could influence the legalities of the everyday workplace. She calls these situations issues in "the field of genetic discrimination." In one example she explains, "Say a company's employee is susceptible to certain workplace toxins. What obligations does the company have to that employee?" Alexee sees opportunities to work in many different areas of the law and has not yet decided which path to pursue. She says she might work for a large medical complex such as UAB or counsel corporations on health-related issues. Although her exact career path is not yet certain, she is adamant about returning and settling in Birmingham.

Alexee is a shining example of the type of student the Cabaniss, Johnston Scholarship seeks to honor. Now in its seventeenth year, the scholarship is endowed by the law firm of Cabaniss, Johnston, Gardner, Dumas & O'Neal of Birmingham and Mobile and is administered by the Alabama Law Foundation. The scholarship's aim is to recognize and assist academically outstanding second-year law students who are Alabama residents and also to help promising law students become lawyers who will make a positive impact on society. Certainly, new technologies, breakthroughs in research, and medical advances will create intriguing legal issues in the future. The Cabaniss, Johnston Scholarship is proud to support Alexee in her quest to confidently meet that future.



'Tis The Season

It's the most wonderful time of the year. A time for family and friends, but most importantly, a time to think of others. Consider a gift to the Alabama Law Foundation fund or the Kids' Chance Scholarship Program. Your donation is, as always, tax-deductible and allows the foundation to provide much needed services and scholarships across the state year after year.

Contributors

Kids' Chance

Lazenby, R. Blake, *In Memory of Jane Wooten*
Moore, Gary A., *In Memory of Bruce H. McCall*
Speagle, Scott & Gina
Storm, Richard A., III
Methvin, Tom & Amy

General Fund

Moore, Gary A., *In Memory of James L. Shores*

The following attorneys and law firms have donated their Attorneys Insurance Mutual of Alabama debentures to the foundation. As the debentures are redeemed, the proceeds are split between the Alabama Law Foundation and the Alabama Lawyers Assistance Foundation. To donate your debenture, please contact Kristin Anderson at the Alabama Law Foundation for the necessary form.

Karen H. Carr
John P. Whittington



Cathy Booth, Alabama representative for NCCI Holdings, Inc., presents a check for Kids' Chance to Tom Oliver, Alabama Law Foundation board member.

New Trustees Welcomed

Alabama Law Foundation Trustees give generously of their time and knowledge. Trustees serve a three-year term during which they work hard to manage the business issues of the foundation, but also to advance the foundation's vision. The Alabama Law Foundation acknowledges and appreciates all of the members of the Board of Trustees for their service.

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(Retired from Randall Publishing in Tuscaloosa):

"It is such an honor to be the first non-lawyer to have the privilege of serving as trustee for the Alabama Law Foundation."

BOBBY SEGALL

(Copeland, Franco, Screws and Gill in Montgomery):

"It is a thrill for me to join in the important work that the Alabama Law Foundation accomplishes."

SYDNEY SMITH

(Smith & Smith in Phenix City):

"I am delighted to be a member of the board of the Alabama Law Foundation because of the many valuable contributions it makes to the people of our state."



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